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ABSTRACT

The curriculum guide for Nova Scotia's advanced level reading course in French as a second language focuses on assisting the students in transferring first language reading skills to the second language and regulating instruction so that neither the pace nor the difficulty level cause student frustration. The program is structured to bring students through a continuum consisting of six stages in reading development: (1) introductory (prereading, recognition reading, and sound/symbol decoding); (2) familiarization; (3) learning techniques and reading for meaning; (4) practice; (5) expansion; and (6) autonomy. A section of the guide is dedicated to each of these stages, outlining the characteristics, the prescribed linguistic content, and classroom instructional techniques for each stage. A list of suggested classroom resource materials for each of the six stages and a bibliography are appended. (MSE)

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INTRODUCTION

Most students of a second language have already learned to read in their mother tongue. Therefore, a first concern is to assist them to transfer the skills they have acquired to another language. In addition, it must also be remembered that their target language vocabulary is very limited and early attempts at reading often leave them frustrated because of this problem and that of interference. It is thus very important that both the pace and the level of difficulty be carefully regulated. A clear line must be drawn between teaching reading and assigning reading. This guide is more concerned with the former but will also provide many recommendations about the kinds of materials appropriate for various stages of development at various age and grade levels.

At each stage, the element of motivation must be kept in mind. If students can be encouraged to want to read, it will be possible for their teachers to provide them with the tools that make reading possible and enjoyable. While interesting material and carefully controlled techniques are essential to a good reading program, only the encouragement and support of the teacher can guarantee its success.

Students must acquire some ability to communicate orally before they begin to read. There is no valid reason to eliminate this step in the French program and aural/oral mastery must always precede the written phase in the early years. While the time for a purely aural/oral experience may be limited, there must be sufficient lag so that when the written symbols are introduced they relate to already familiar oral language. The process will then involve relating sound and meaning to written symbols. Specific guidelines, including objectives for the stages¹ by which this process may be developed, are included in this guide. In addition, teachers will find recommended techniques and activities to provide for presentation and practice of the skills which they are helping their students acquire. Some suggestions for evaluating the level of competency reached at various levels of skill acquisition are also included.

1. The six stages mentioned in this guide are those recommended by Wilga Rivers in several of her publications. Prior to Rivers' work, George Sherer called these stages "levels" in his article "A System for Teaching Modern Foreign Languages", Teacher's Notebook in Modern Foreign Languages, 1964.

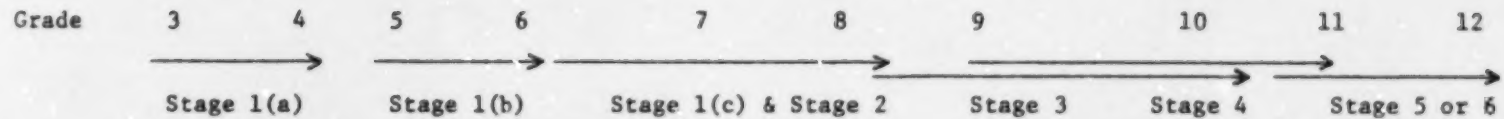
AIMS

To learn to read in French:

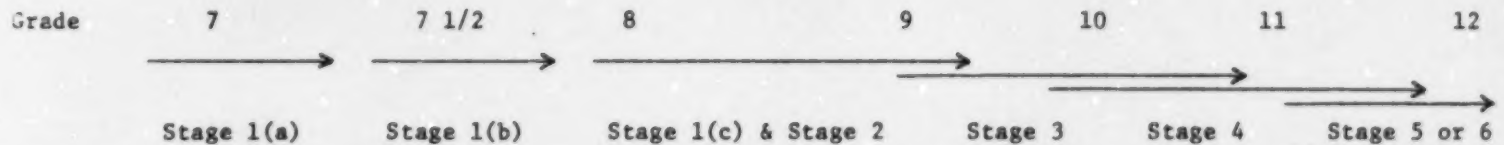
- to obtain information in order to satisfy wants and needs
- to follow written directions in completing tasks
- to understand correspondence
- to understand written announcements such as timetables, programs, menus, advertisements, newspapers
- to experience enjoyment and entertainment: novels, short stories, plays, poems, songs, games
- to develop a base for later study related to a specific purpose such as employment, literary analysis, research, translation

READING PROGRAM CONTINUUM

Entry:



Entry:



Stage 1(a) - 100% aural/oral
 Stage 1(b) - Recognition
 Stage 1(c) - Decoding Sound/Symbol
 Stage 2 - Practice I

Stage 3 - Reading Techniques
 Stage 4 - Practice II
 Stage 5 - Expansion
 Stage 6 - Autonomy

STAGE I THE INTRODUCTORY STAGE

- A. Pre-reading
- B. Recognition reading
- C. Sound/symbol decoding

A. Pre-reading

This is the period when students are developing their aural/oral skills exclusively. It would normally last for two years if French is begun at the elementary level. If initial entry occurs after grade six, a minimum of five months should elapse before recognition reading is introduced.

At the end of this period students should be able to:

- discriminate aurally among sounds of the alphabet; between vowel and consonant blends, between oral and nasal vowels
- understand globally spoken French at an appropriate level
- repeat accurately the sounds, words, sentences presented to them
- pronounce acceptably when they have been taught
- respond automatically, using certain standard expressions
- understand some finer details of the language selected for use in the classroom
- use correctly cadence, intonation, stress, rhythm, fluency and pace in the simple dialogues which they have mastered

The materials recommended for level one of the Core Program will provide the basic vocabulary and expressions used for this stage. Both the recommended materials and the Introductory Level Guide should be consulted for basic teaching strategies appropriate for the presentation, practice, application and evaluation of the aural/oral language elements to be taught. At this stage, no written clues such as labels on pictures or objects, words of songs, dialogues, etc. should be given to the students. Unless a constant effort is maintained to help them hear and use oral language correctly, they will not reach the level of language acquisition which they must attain if they are to read successfully later on.

There are usually very few opportunities for students to hear French spoken outside the classroom, so it is essential that this period not be unduly shortened or by-passed entirely. It is always easier to provide a written support in the mistaken notion that children are incapable of developing auditory memory, than it is to ensure that the aural/oral base for reading is well established. Auditory memory (the ability to retain sounds) is essential to the learning of languages but this does not mean that systematic memorization of material is required or desirable.

As the basic sounds are taught and tested, the students will simultaneously be learning simple dialogues, hearing short stories and engaging in games and activities which allow them to practise oral reproduction. Systematic testing must be carried out to determine whether students can demonstrate control of the objectives of this level before progressing to the next level.

B. Recognition Reading

After they have mastered a base of oral vocabulary and expressions students may be gradually exposed to these in their written form to help them carry out classroom activities. Careful selection and introduction of certain well known oral elements for reading by recognition will help support the oral program and avoid unnecessary memorization. While recognition reading should not be delayed until students begin devising a "script" to help memory, there should be a definite lag between the aural/oral presentation and the presentation of the written form. When they have learned to read for recognition, students should be able to:

- recognize without difficulty, in written form, most of the expressions they have learned orally
- use correct pronunciation, pace and intonation when they "read"
- use written language to help them in games, songs, dialogues, drills

It will be particularly important to ensure that the second objective is reached. Later, when the reading and spelling of sounds are taught, there will be the tendency to break down words into syllables. If due attention is paid to developing the smooth flow of the spoken language at this point, this good habit is more likely to be continued throughout the period of learning sound-symbol correspondence.

Teachers will find many suggestions for teaching and using recognition reading in the materials provided for this purpose on the recommended lists. It should be noted that the use of this form of reading should be integrated into overall class activities and should not be isolated from them. Recognition reading must be introduced gradually. In the beginning, very few of the words and expressions already mastered orally would be used for recognition reading. As students become more proficient, the volume of material introduced may be increased and the period between oral mastery and presentation of the written form may be shortened.

Although this guide deals with reading, it may be well to note that there must be no spelling required of the student at this point. Writing should consist only of copying from lists which are provided.

To carry out evaluation, the same kinds of activities as those carried on in class may be used. Songs, games and exercises may be taken from the recommended materials or prepared by the teacher and patterned on such familiar activities as these. It should be very quickly apparent to the teacher whether the individual student can recognize and use written expressions or whether he or she must depend on classmates to provide clues. If the latter is true, then remedial work is required before the next stage may be introduced.

C. Sound-Symbol Decoding

After having determined that students can demonstrate mastery of recognition reading, the teacher will proceed to the teaching of the basic symbols encoding the sounds of the French language. It is not necessary to teach the phonetic symbols but rather the alphabet symbols representing basic sounds. At the end of this stage students should be able to:

- recognize and pronounce correctly the following sound-letter correspondences:

 1. (a) oi (voila), a (qa), à (à)
 2. (e) es (les), é (café), ai (J'ai), er (parler), ez (parlez), et (et)
 3. (i) i (sir), i (diner), y (stylo)
 4. (E) e pronounced consonant (détective), è (mère), ê (fenêtre),
ai (lait), ay (crayon), ei (treize), (est)
 5. (ā) an (mange), am (chambre), en (entre), em (temps)
 6. (u) ou (blouse), où (où)
 7. (o) o (rose), ô (côté), au (chaud), eau (tableau)
 8. (y) u (bureau), ue (rue)
 9. (O) on (bonbon)
 10. (O) o + pronounced consonant (police, école, fromage, etc.)
 11. (Ē) in (cinq), ain (pain)
 12. (j) ille (oreille), (chandail), i vowel, (piano), y vowel (crayon)
 13. (w) oi (noir), ou vowel (oui)
 14. (γ) u + l (parapluie, huit, cuisine)
 15. (ø) eu (feu), eus (serveuse), eux (yeux), oeu (oeufs)
 16. (ōē) un (un, brun)
 17. oe, eu (docteur), oeu pronounced consonant (soeur, boeuf)
 18. (ə) le, me, te, ce, je

- read these sound-letter correspondences correctly when they occur in words, sentences, paragraphs.

The importance of teaching these letter symbols cannot be stressed too strongly. Not only will the students' ability to read well depend to a great extent on them, but so too will their ability to spell and write correctly.

If this material is properly taught, tested and reviewed as necessary, the problem of interference can be almost entirely eliminated. Many appropriate techniques may be used to teach the symbols effectively. The following suggested steps may help:

In at least two class periods, proceed through the following steps:

1. Prepare a picture chart containing clues for the sound being introduced.
2. Drill the sentence(s) containing the sound orally, with reference to the visual clues.
3. Present the written form of the sentence(s) together with the visual clues to the class.
4. Underline the letters with the common sound being presented.
5. Have student read:
 - (a) the sounds (words, parts of words)
 - (b) the sentences - be sure these are done individually as well as in a group
6. Ask students to supply words they know which contain the same sound. (List these on the board.)
7. Present the sentences in a different order and without picture clues. Use as a test of achievement.
8. Present new sentences containing the same sound. Without modelling these, call on individual students to read, making corrections as necessary. Use choral repetition for reinforcement. (Please note: all vocabulary used should be familiar.)
9. Use tapes with paused intervals for repetition.
10. Open books, read silently and listen to recorded models.
11. Repeat in unison.
12. Repeat individually.
13. Test. Both teacher's voice and other, taped voices, should be used.

As each new sound is introduced it must be presented, contrasted with the other sounds learned, thoroughly drilled and tested. A number of other, similar approaches are provided for teachers in the materials recommended to accompany the reading program. Phonetic charts are available to teachers from recommended lists to help this process.

This is a long process. It is very difficult if not impossible, for it to succeed unless the students already use correctly many examples of the sounds in their oral vocabulary. For this reason, neither the early stages of aural/

oral development nor the teaching of the written symbols for the sounds should be rushed.

It is obvious that the teaching of sound-letter correspondences must be integrated with continued aural/oral activities as well as with the practise of spelling, writing and reading of simple materials containing already mastered vocabulary and expressions. There is always considerable overlapping of new material, review and remedial teaching. At this stage there is still need for considerable stress to be placed on aural/oral development. No more than twenty-five percent of class time, or testing should be given to the reading program at this level.

STAGE II FAMILIARIZATION (PRACTICE I)

This stage is carried on simultaneously with the teaching of sound/symbol correspondences. As students learn the graphic symbols, they also need to be reading many new combinations of familiar material. As a result of this, they will learn to:

- read correctly simple selections containing known lexical and grammatical items.

It should be noted that, during the period of recognition reading, students impose preconceived sounds on the printed material. At this stage, they deduce the sound from the print. Because of the difficulty of finding high interest materials within the limitations of the students' level of language, much of this material will be prepared from familiar dialogues etc. by the teacher and the students themselves. Some simple materials in fresh contexts are provided in lists of suggestions for teachers at the end of this guide. It should be clearly understood that all of these activities are carried on in French. AT NO TIME IS THE PURPOSE TO TRANSLATE OR OTHERWISE RESTATE THIS MATERIAL IN ENGLISH.

Testing of reading should indicate that students are able to read such materials correctly once they have been systematically taught their sound symbols and given sufficient practice in reading known materials.

STAGE III LEARNING THE TECHNIQUES

When students can read correctly and without difficulty most materials containing familiar elements, it is time to place greater emphasis on decoding for meaning. The main purpose of this process is to teach students to read with comprehension selections of various types drawing on a vocabulary of approximately 2,000 words. Specifically, they must:

- read selections based on a 2,000 word vocabulary directly in French while grasping the author's central meaning
- use with skill techniques of word building, visual skipping and intelligent guessing
- use resources such as unilingual dictionaries and grammars to help refine their reading comprehension skills

Since the objectives of this level of the reading program are difficult to reach, even in the mother tongue, it is wise to remember that many students will not be prepared to strive to reach them unless they are personally motivated to do so. Both the selection of the materials used and the manner of presenting them must be carefully planned.

At first, reading materials should be slightly below the students' reading level so that reading may be enjoyed. As reading skills improve, the level of difficulty may be increased but at a pace which allows direct reading for information or pleasure with no translation necessary. Few things are more discouraging to the reader than a text which requires constant referral to outside resources. In the beginning, reading materials should have a ratio of no more than one new item for every thirty-five included in the selection (approximately one new word in every three to four lines of print). Because all students will not be at exactly the same level it will be important to have a range of selections available at different levels. These should be short, simple and interesting to the students, with many good illustrations to provide clues for meaning.

To be interesting, reading materials must relate to a topic of concern to the reader. In any classroom, topics will range from humor to mysteries, animal stories, sports, human interest, etc. It will also be necessary to provide a good variety of things to read, including narratives, dialogues, explanations, directions, descriptions, announcements, arguments. These should be in the form of books, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, correspondence, etc., as well as in the basic texts. More and more simple, well illustrated materials on a wide variety of subjects are now available for language classes. It is known that students will read above their normal level if they are really interested in the topics. Carefully selected materials with high interest, graded as to level of language, can often encourage reading in even reluctant students.

It must be understood, however, that the mere availability of such materials is not sufficient. Both the encouragement of the teacher and a good introduction of the materials is necessary. The teacher's role should include:

1. Selecting the materials to be made available, keeping in mind level, topics and format.
2. Preparing lexical, grammatical and socio-cultural information as well as tapes, visual clues etc. necessary to introduce the materials.
3. Making a brief, interesting presentation to introduce the reading selection to the students, using the materials prepared for this purpose.
4. Reading: either to the students or with them while exploring passages which may present difficulties.

(Note: this is carried out in French - translation is neither necessary nor desirable.)

Some of this can also be done with the tape recorder while students follow in their books. At times they may be encouraged to read aloud although they would normally read silently. The emphasis is always on discovering the author's meaning using the techniques which help this process. Some of this reading must be for pleasure or enjoyment only, without further exploitation.

5. Discussing what has been selected for further study, making sure that deeper meaning, inferences, etc. are understood as well as global meaning.
6. Application: Some of the material may be used for written exercises and for further oral exploration of related topics. The information and increasing expertise gained will then be applied to assigned reading which allows for students' individual levels and interests.
7. Testing so that the teacher is assured of students' progress and, what is probably more important, so that students have some tangible proof of their own progress.

This process is repeated in a spiral as progressively more advanced levels are reached. For some students, three or four years will be required to reach the desired 2,000 word vocabulary base level. A minimum of two years will probably be needed for most students. At the grade ten level, it would be normal to expect that approximately fifty percent of the emphasis in both class time and testing would be placed on the reading and writing skills. The practice of reading is always integrated with the practice of the other three skills although specific reading strategies are taught during the process.

Reading for Meaning

A number of reading strategies will help in the decoding of meaning in written language. Students need to learn to apply these to their reading in French. Techniques such as the following can do much to assist reading comprehension.

A. Expecting a message:

After the teacher has introduced the new text by providing visual clues and any other support which may be necessary, students are given a copy of the text to study. Each reader will have certain expectations about what the message of the text will contain. As students think about their assumptions, they are asked to look closely at any illustrations there may be, to consider the title, the first lines and/or the last lines of the paragraph(s) and then the connecting words. Without further study and with the teacher's help, they try to refine their original ideas to discover more precisely what the author is talking about. Then they read the selection and discuss the main ideas, whether their original expectations were modified or confirmed and what they found in the text to lead them to their conclusions.

In the beginning, one or two paragraphs will be sufficient for this type of study. As the students become more adept at decoding meaning, they are given longer texts. They are then ready to proceed to other techniques which can help them read more quickly while gaining even more precise information. Visual skipping and intelligent guessing are two such techniques.

B. Visual skipping:

When introducing this technique the text is examined, one sentence at a time, to discover which words make it possible to grasp the general sense of the passage. Students are encouraged to look for the basic message by deliberately concentrating on those elements which convey the central message. Later, more details surrounding the main ideas will be studied. At this point, they are learning to skip over such details in order to go directly to the main message. This same process may be used for a paragraph and then for a text containing several paragraphs.

Reading in this way is accompanied by discussion and exercises which will help pinpoint the parts of the sentence which convey most meaning. Students will learn to spot key words, to use their knowledge of grammar to identify verbs and their subjects and to watch for function words which will all convey information about what the writer is saying.

Asking leading questions such as who? what? when? where? why? how? can sometimes also help students concentrate their attention on points which are essential to convey the message.

As they read, students will occasionally discover unfamiliar words which they need to understand to get meaning. They are then directed to try another technique called intelligent guessing.

C. Intelligent guessing:

When a word or expression encountered in reading appears to be new, students should be encouraged to guess what the meaning could be from the clues contained in the context and from their own experience. They must also learn to live with some uncertainty about precise meaning while they proceed further in the text. Frequently, this is all that may be needed to clarify a particular point. It always helps a great deal to work with materials that are not too difficult. To be successful at guessing, students need to feel confident enough to try. In turn, their confidence is built up if their guesses are usually successful.

To build up the ability to detect meaning quickly from groups of words even when one or more may be unfamiliar, begin with short, simple exercises which contain sufficient clues to enable most students to guess meaning correctly. At first the meaning will probably be rather obvious and the language stilted. As students become more adept, language usage can become more natural. Familiar words may help unlock meaning, whether they be words already studied or cognates. It is, however, wise to point out false cognates which may otherwise cause a great deal of confusion. Awareness of certain prefixes and suffixes which may be added to familiar "core" words will also help students find meaning.

A study of the words themselves and of their placement in relation to each other will lead to the discovery of many structural clues. Wilga Rivers suggests that the detection of meaning can be greatly improved by learning quick recognition of parts of speech, persons and tenses of verbs, words introducing phrases (*dans, en, depuis, pendant, avant ...*) and clauses (*depuis que, pendant que, avant que, parce que, si ...*). She also recommends that readers be aware of adverbs of time, place and manner (*demain, souvent; y, là, quelque part; bien, trop, assez ...*), indicators of interrogation (*Qu'est-ce que?, Quand?, Où?, Comment?, Pourquoi? ...*) and negation (*ne-pas, ne-jamais, ne-rien ...*). Attention should also be drawn to tense indicators, such as the *r* for the future and to such indicators of specific meaning as *que* or the use of *à* to show relationship between two people.² The ability to read for meaning will be greatly improved by learning to recognize and use clues in what is understood to guess the meaning of things which are not, at first, understood.

In addition to using words and grammatical clues to find meaning, it will also be possible to use pragmatic facts about normal, logical sequence. Students will often need to stop and think about how one action or fact normally precedes another. Their own experiences can be called upon to help them understand that certain stages usually follow each other and that there are limitations as to the possible results which can occur. These are techniques which students use,

2. Further information may be found in Wilga Rivers, A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French, Oxford University Press, New York, 1975 or in Louise C. Seibert, Skills and Techniques for Reading French, The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore 18, Md., 1958.

sometimes quite unconsciously, in reading their own language. It is often necessary for the teacher to point out that these same techniques are equally effective when applied to reading in a second language.

The teacher will need to make a very careful selection of materials which are not too difficult for most of the students in the class. The distraction caused by too many unfamiliar words makes it impossible to concentrate on meaning. Early attempts at reading without sufficient help and appropriate texts can easily stifle any further incentive to enjoy reading or to use it for gaining information. Such texts should be simple enough in language and interesting enough in content that there will not be constant frustration and the desire to translate each word into English.

D. Vocabulary Building

One way to help students avoid translation and use direct reading is to build up their vocabulary in the second language. Much of this work is carried on during the pre-reading period as well as concurrently with the teaching of reading. This acquisition of active vocabulary (words and expressions which can be used automatically) and passive vocabulary (items which are understood) should include a great deal of high frequency vocabulary. By the time reading is introduced, there should be no hesitancy in the recognition of the language which is included in the early levels of most well recognized standard texts. Classroom activities should include a good variety of word games to ensure that this build up takes place. Program guides, teachers' manuals and many other sources provide excellent suggestions for activities which may be easily adapted to a particular classroom situation.

As reading skills are being taught, vocabulary building activities must not be neglected. Some of these should include: a study of cognates, recognition of verb forms and other structural elements, learning synonyms, antonyms, simple definitions, paraphrasing, word association, look-alikes, words linked by meaning, etc.

1. Cognates

When studying cognates, a good source to consult is Seibert in Skills and Techniques for Reading French. The author recommends including cognates with slight differences of spelling, those with slight differences of meaning and false or "deceptive" cognates.

In the first category, look for:

- 1) *e* endings which become *er* (*amuser, dîner, imposer, placer*) or change slightly (*échanger, mesurer, prouver*)
- 2) *er* endings which disappear in English (*calmer, accepter, visiter, préférer*)
- 3) *ize* which becomes *iser* (*organiser, analyser, civiliser*)

- 4) *ate* changing to *er* (*osciller, éparer, irriter*)
- 5) *oste* changing to *quer* (*indiquer, impliquer*)
- 6) *y* becoming *ier* (*multiplier, marier, orier*)
- 7) *ish* which changes to *ir* (*accomplir, punir, finir*)
- 8) *y* becomes *é* (*beauté, humidité, curiosité*)
- 9) *ous* in adverbs becoming *eux, euse* (*curieux, fameux, joyeux*)
- 10) *cl* in adjectives changing to *el, elle* (*éternel, officiel, réel*)
- 11) *or* in nouns changing to *eur* (*docteur, conducteur, odeur, directeur*)
- 12) *y* in nouns becoming *ie* or *i* (*emploi, délai, cérémonie*)
- 13) *oun* changing to *on* (*profond, fontaine, avertisseur*)
- 14) adding an extra *e* (*riche, soupe, juste, paire, branche*)
- 15) *io* becoming *ique* (*comique, tonique, républicain*)
- 16) changing *er* to *re* (*centre, lettre, offre, chambre, octobre*)
- 17) *k* or *ok* becoming *que, quer* (*brique, marquer, masque*)
- 18) *e* in English replaced by a circumflex (*hôte, arrêter, forêt, homme*)
- 19) *ive* changing to *if, ive* (*attentif, décisif, respectif*)
- 20) the *ea* sound in English becomes *ai* (*traiter, exister, paix*)
- 21) *e* changing to *es* or *é* (*étudier, espace, étranger, état, école*)
- 22) *o* to *oh* and *el* or *al* to *au* or *eau* (*chat, chameau, vaisseau*)
- 23) *dis* becoming *dé* or *dés* (*décourager, déplacer, désordre*)
- 24) the prefix *ad* changing to *a* before *v* or *j* (*avantage, avancer, ajuster*)

There are also cognates which have slight differences of meaning or, in some instances the English cognate is not the word most frequently used. These and apparent or false cognates will frequently cause difficulty for the inexperienced reader of a second language. The teacher will need to provide information and assistance to help students avoid unnecessary confusion during this period. A few examples of the first type are:

vapeur (vapor/steam, mist, fumes)
sombre (somber/dark)
répondre (respond/answer, reply)
séjour (sojourn/stay)
chagrin (chagrin/regret)
voyage (voyage/trip)

Many apparent cognates do not mean what they would seem to imply from their spelling in French. Some typical examples would be:

<u>French</u>	<u>English</u>
<i>le coin</i> (corner)	coin (<i>pièce, monnaie</i>)
<i>le front</i> (forehead)	in front of (<i>devant</i>)
<i>la phrase</i> (sentence)	a phrase (<i>une locution</i>)
<i>tirer</i> (pull, draw)	to tire (<i>fatiguer</i>)
<i>rester</i> (to stay, remain)	to rest (<i>se reposer</i>)
<i>la rente</i> (income)	the rent (<i>loyer</i>)
<i>la pièce</i> (room, play)	a piece (<i>un morceau</i>)
<i>injurer</i> (wrong, insult)	injury (<i>une blessure</i>)
<i>le store</i> (window blind)	store (<i>le magasin</i>)

2. Structural Elements:

The ability of good readers to use structural clues depends a great deal on their awareness of how the various language elements relate to each other. For instance, it is very difficult to understand what verbs mean without knowing how verbs are conjugated. Both regular and irregular forms need to be known. In particular, the verbs *avoir* and *être* used alone and as auxiliaries for compound tenses will be needed. For the purpose of reading, it should be noted that the aim will be recognition rather than the formation of various forms. Thus it will probably be that students will encounter and understand with ease many verb forms in their reading long before they will be able to reproduce them correctly in other skill areas. This will also be true of many other grammatical elements.*

3. Word Association:

It will often happen that the other words in a sentence will supply clues as to the possible meaning of an unfamiliar word. Exercises which involve selecting a topic and reading sentences which use many words related to the topic may be useful. If the topic concerns a house, for example, the students may be encouraged to look for such nouns as *toit, porte, chambre, mur, plancher, escalier* and verbs such as *entrer, sortir, monter, fermer, etc.* Later, they may find appropriate adjectives and adverbs and still later, less familiar words which they may encounter when reading about this topic.

*See section on Intelligent Guessing

A similar exercise can provide practice in finding extended meanings. Using a series of sentences, students may guess at the meaning of words related to *tenir*, for example. This could include commonly used forms as well as idioms such as *tenir à son opinion*, *à quoi s'en tenir*, *savoir se tenir à sa place*, *tenir sa maison*, *se tenir pour*, etc.

Look alikes or word families provide another opportunity to expand vocabulary. Using the verb *courir* this way may provide words such as *coureur*, *une course*, *un coursier*, *des courriers*, *le courrier*, *accourir*, *parcourir*, *concourir*, *concours*, *un concurrent*, *la concurrence* and later, *couramment*, *le courant*, *le mois courant*.

Those may be used in sentences which bring out their meaning, they could be included in a paragraph containing simple explanations or descriptions of what they mean, or leading questions could be asked about them.

4. Definitions

It often appears that the simple, most obvious way to help students understand meaning is to refer them to a bilingual dictionary. Without belaboring the issue, it may be that what seems simple and obvious in the beginning may lead to far greater problems on a long term basis. Accordingly, definition of unfamiliar vocabulary is best carried out by using simple explanations or descriptions, or by reading the sentence containing the problem word and substituting a synonym which is familiar. It may also be possible to use paraphrasing or to give an antonym (*C'est l'opposé de ...*). The teacher may wish to use a picture or gestures to help. When comprehension takes place, the student should be encouraged to try to fit the new word or words into the context of the material he is reading. If the sentence makes good sense the meaning is likely correct. (At first this will usually need to be checked by the teacher.) It will also be apparent that nouns are replaced by nouns, verbs by verbs, etc.

Whatever tactics may be selected, the language used is always the one which the students are studying. The purpose of time spent in reading and in vocabulary building is not to read and build vocabulary in English nor to re-state in English what is being read in French. The purpose, in the simplest of terms, is to make it possible for the students to read French with comprehension and to increase their vocabulary in French while they are doing so.

E. Use of Resources

While there are many resources which can help in finding meaning in written texts, the two which will probably be most useful to students at this stage are dictionaries and simple, basic grammars. Since the purpose is to read with comprehension, not translate into English, simple unilingual dictionaries will provide the most help. For younger

students, a picture dictionary will be suitable; for older students, a dictionary containing limited vocabulary with some picture clues may be selected. Later, more complete and sophisticated versions may be introduced. Several appropriate ones are recommended in the list of suggested materials. Dictionary usage drills such as those described in the Core Program, Intermediate Level guide can help students make good use of their dictionaries.

The grammar sections of recommended materials, often called *liste de structures* or *observations sur la langue* can be used profitably to help with the comprehension of language behaviour patterns. Students should also be gradually building up a list of their own observations as a reference for present and future use. Verb charts, where verb forms are arranged in logical order, can be very helpful for this purpose.* Basic grammars should be available in the classroom so that teachers can instruct students about their use in finding the information which they will need to carry out reading and other activities.

*See sample in section on resources.

STAGE IV - PRACTICE II

For most students who are receiving sound instruction in reading, the stage IV phase will be entered some time after Stage III will have begun. Where French is not taught before grade seven, many students will find it difficult to master the objectives of this level by grade twelve.

On the other hand, it should be possible for many students who have begun French in the elementary grades to reach this same level in grade eleven. By the end of Stage IV (Practice II), students should be able to:

- read selections based on 3,500 word vocabulary directly in French while grasping the author's meaning
- read intensively at this level while being aware of time value and aspect
- read extensively at this level for personal pleasure and information
- read aloud excerpts from selected materials while demonstrating control of an acceptable level of oral proficiency

Through reading while receiving instruction and practice in the various techniques described in Stage III, students should be able to build vocabulary quite rapidly. While much of the acquired vocabulary will be at the level of recognition of meaning (passive), it will be possible for many students to read selections with a 3,000 to 5,000 word base with comprehension at the end of a two to three year period. Such selections will usually be abridged or adapted from original published writings - frequently referred to as "simplified" authentic materials. It will not be unusual for some imprecision of interpretation to exist in the early stages. This may be tolerated as long as the main ideas are clear. As students become more adept at using the various techniques of reading they should not find it unduly frustrating to strive for greater clarity and precision in deriving meaning from the texts provided for their use.

While materials selected for reading at this level should gradually increase in difficulty, it is still necessary that they be selected with care. As in Stage II (Practice I) consideration must be given to level, topic, and format to provide a good range of appropriate materials for presentation and practice.

Practice needs to include the kinds of reading exercises recommended in program materials and guides as well as ample opportunity to read both intensively and extensively.

Through reading intensively, students develop an awareness of both when and from what perspective the text explores the topic. The element of time will include attention to present, past and future indicators as well as to duration of the interval being explored. A sense of time value can be developed by taking specific texts and focusing on the tense choices of the authors. Wilga Rivers, in A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French suggests that it is particularly useful to watch for what the author means when he expresses action in the "*passé simple*" or the "*passé composé*" or the "*imparfait*". She cautions that thoughtful analysis of the text rather than study of the rules will be a more efficient method to use. She also warns that translation will not be particularly effective.

Some time elements, including a study of the past tense choices, but more especially, the examination of the use of the subjunctive mood, will relate directly to aspect or "a way of looking at an action or a situation as it is taking place."³ A simple example of this would be to focus awareness on the subjective versus the objective view. Rivers uses the illustration "*Je ne pense pas qu'il soit parti*. (Some people say so, I don't believe it.) and *Je pense qu'il est parti* (his car isn't in the parking lot)"⁴

There are many words in French which appear to coincide with the meaning of certain English words. Closer study will indicate that they present many problems to the English student. Some common examples, again selected by Rivers, are the verbs "to leave" and "to take".

- "to leave" - leave an article behind (*laisser*)
- leave a place (*quitter*)
- leave (*partir*)
- leave a room, house, etc. (*sortir*)
- leave something alone (*n'y touchez pas!*)
- "to take" - take/pick up (*prendre*)
- take/carry (*porter*)
- take away (*emporter*)
- take someone with (*emener*)
- take someone to (*amener*)

While the main purpose of reading during the Practice I stage is to learn to read and to improve language skills, the emphasis in the Practice II stage moves toward reading to appreciate and use the ideas contained in the text. A deeper study of language encourages appreciation of the literary value of the materials selected for in-depth or intensive treatment while individual reading opportunities will allow the student to use his reading skill for his own information and pleasure.

Extensive reading provides entertainment and enjoyment - many texts providing interesting topics, attractively presented at an appropriate level will motivate further exploration and expansion of the reading skill. At this time, students who enjoy reading will very quickly increase their speed and improve their level of comprehension. Such reading in class and at home will allow them to research topics from French sources for class assignments or as a base for discussion in class or with friends. For many students, this will be the highest level which they are able to reach while they are studying French.

Testing

It will be possible to use the same kinds of activities as those carried on in teaching reading to test for comprehension and oral reading proficiency. To test the overall ability of the student to understand the text and use vocabulary, the Cloze technique is widely accepted. This is a written test

3. Wilga Rivers, A Practical Guide to the Teaching of French, Oxford University Press, New York, 1975, pg. 204.

4. Ibid pg. 205.

for which students should practise completing exercises similar in type to the test.

It will be sufficient to mention that some reading practice should be oral. In particular poetry, plays and certain prose (directions, explanations, prepared talks, some descriptive material) needs to be read aloud. The usual standards for oral reproduction should be applied with particular attention being given to the specific styles used for poetry, argument, declamation, etc.

To prepare a Cloze test, the teacher simply selects a passage at the appropriate level. The first and last sentences are left intact, every n^{th} (10th, 8th, 5th) word is removed, and replaced with an underlined space. The usual test has every tenth word removed - the level of difficulty increases greatly as the number of words between blanks decreases. Students are required to fill in the missing words. The test is not timed. The teacher pre-determines (and informs the students) whether only a specific word is acceptable or whether a synonym may be provided. The selected word must be properly spelled to receive value.

In recent controlled experiments, this type of test has been shown to correlate very closely with other valid texts demonstrating control of integrated reading skills.

STAGE V - EXPANSION

For some students, in particular those who begin French at the elementary level, the challenge of the Stage IV objectives will be met in grade eleven or early in the grade twelve year. These students will be interested in progressing to the stage where reading texts no longer need to be abridged or adapted. Selection of texts will be necessary and some help will be given with vocabulary development, but students are now able to use reading for purposes other than learning the language and how to use it. During this period, students will use reading in French to:

- gain information to extract ideas and arguments
- discuss both textual content and the implications of that content
- develop imagination, literary appreciation, good judgment and discriminative reasoning

At this level, students identify easily with their own peers, they become more aware of abstract perceptions and tend to develop an awareness of their own culture and that of other communities. Since they are usually capable of logical thinking and are able to generalize, topics which interest them will have a considerably higher level of sophistication than those of earlier years. It will be desirable to provide materials for listening (speeches, readings, plays, poetry), speaking (discussions, debates, themes), and writing (reports, notes, summaries, commentaries) as well as many of the kinds of materials available at earlier levels. More than ever before, there will be need for integrating the four skills, for linking French with other subject areas and with the students' extracurricular interests. The need to read a diversity of unabridged materials will require the use of well developed techniques of intelligent guessing.

Intensive reading will be used to discover and appreciate literary techniques. The use of different levels of language, the recognition of more complex structures, the ability to appreciate style, all receive attention during intensive reading. This is the kind of reading which serves to provide information for such assignments as book reports, oral and written summaries, a paraphrase (in other words) and a critique (in my opinion).

It will also be possible to use sentence drills to aid comprehension of fine distinctions among such words as: *cependant*, *pourtant*, *toutefois*, *donc*, *enfin*, *alors* and *d'ailleurs*.

Extensive reading should allow students to pursue their own interests: political, pragmatic, artistic, scientific, social. They will also be interested in many literary forms ranging from humor to tragedy. While some limitation of selection is needed to avoid frustration, the range of material within students' capability, is much more extended. Since many reading materials are readily available at this level, little difficulty should be encountered in providing sufficient variety to satisfy students' needs.

While some students may be able to recognize elements of style, many will need assistance to develop this sense. All could probably benefit from exercises such as the following:

- 1) Changing assertive sentences to interrogative sentences.
- 2) Combining several sentences into one sentence.
- 3) Changing one form of writing to another (e.g. descriptive to dialogue).
- 4) Changing direct quotations to indirect quotations.
- 5) Imitating an author's style (change the content).
- 6) Giving a series of events in sequence.
- 7) Giving a summary of events.
- 8) Giving an opinion (critique) about a selection which has been read or reporting on another person's opinion.

This list of suggestions is by no means an exhaustive one. Many such exercises can be used, some orally and some in written form to help students develop a sense of style.

The level of difficulty of reading materials and of the assignments based on reading will require many resource materials. These materials should include grammars, at least one of which should be a well recognized source of more advanced forms. Standard unilingual and bilingual dictionaries will be useful, particularly for completing assignments based on reading. Some specialized dictionaries such as those containing technical terms, dictionaries of synonyms, those containing Canadian terminology and at least one good dictionary of idiomatic expressions should be available for reference purposes. In the beginning, it will be necessary for the teacher to introduce each of these types of reference materials and to carry out a few directed drills with the students who will need to use them.

Evaluation of student performance should relate directly to the objectives of Stage V and to the emphasis placed on activities related to those objectives during class periods. It would be reasonable to use oral and written reports, notes prepared for such reports, participation in formal and informal discussions, and all other such activities for this purpose. When assigning marks at this level, elements of style (expression), content (accuracy of information), and vocabulary usage would rank first in importance. If the assignment based on reading is to be written, limited value would be placed on spelling, punctuation and, perhaps, graphics. For example, out of a total of 50 marks, distribution could be as follows:

Style - 20 points
Content - 20 points
Other elements - 10 points

Included in style would be:

- a) Literary merit: originality, imagination, variety of sentence structure, use of figures of speech.
- b) Organization: introduction, development, conclusion (of paragraphs and of the total presentation)

c) Vocabulary: range, level

d) Expression: precision, clarity, comprehension, flow

Content could include:

Four well developed ideas or components. Half marks could be deducted for inaccuracies.

Other elements:

These would include all of those points which had been stressed during class periods, including the "mechanics" of the mode of expression.⁵

5. Many of the suggestions for evaluation used in this section are taken from Rebecca M. Valette, Modern Language Testing, A Handbook, Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., New York, 1967, and from a presentation by J.A. Boyd, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario, made to the Fifth International Conference of The Ontario Modern Language Teachers' Association on April 15, 1977.

STAGE VI - AUTONOMY

It will probably be obvious that few students will reach the stage of liberation or autonomy in reading at the High School level. Since it is possible that some students who have a native French background or those who are in Honours level programs may reach Stage VI, a brief treatment is provided.

A student at this level will be able to read:

- unabridged, unglossed texts of moderate difficulty for pleasure and profit with direct association of meaning.

Such reading will allow for independent study of topics of special interest to the student. Some help will be needed in two areas: a) selecting texts and b) a plan for study.

Texts for reading may include popular magazines, newspapers, books or articles which do not contain highly technical or very complicated levels of language usage. Some forms of figurative language used in both poetry and prose, for example, could prove to be unsuitable for the age and ability level of the student.

Included in a good plan for study should be classroom exercises to help further develop the techniques of reading. In particular, vocabulary building and the use of resource materials will be stressed. The teacher will help students set up individual reading programs based on a special area of interest. Some may wish to compare and contrast styles in clothing, art, architecture, in different countries or during different time periods. Others may prefer to explore topics of general interest such as urban problems, bilingualism, folklore. Reading units are usually more interesting and productive when they are followed by a written or oral presentation to a larger audience.

Testing at this stage would be similar to that carried out at the Stage V level. Activities and reports carried out in class would serve as a base for the preparation of tests or for the awarding of marks based on the level of performance when the activity is being carried out.

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM RESOURCES

DICTIONARIES AND WORD BUILDERS

Suitable for Stage I (b), (c) and early Stage II

Je dis - Je lis (Deschamps, Groulx, Moros),

A soft cover picture dictionary, organized in thematic groups, no English, one page of "Début de phrase" provided, one page of "Mots usuels", an index of words in alphabetical order.

Available for approximately \$4.00 from:

The Book Society of Canada Ltd.
Box 200, Agincourt, Ontario, M1S 3B6

My First French Word Book (Henstock)

My Second French Word Book (Henstock)

Soft cover picture dictionaries arranged in alphabetical order with a simple picture to illustrate each word. Short sections at the back cover time, verbs, days of week, months, verbs, adjectives, etc. The second level gives short sentences under each picture with the words used in a familiar context. Available for about \$3.00 or more from:

J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd.,
100 Scarsdale Road
Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2R8

Suitable for Stage II and early Stage III

Premier Dictionnaire en Images

A soft cover picture dictionary containing a list of the 1,200 most frequently used words spoken in French. Available for approximately \$5.00 from:

Marcel Didier (Canada) Limitée
2050 rue de Bleury, Suite 500, Montréal
Québec, H3A 2J4

Vocabulaire Fondamental Illustré 1

Vocabulaire Fondamental Illustré 2 (Kropman et al)

Soft cover picture dictionaries. Listed according to centre d'intérêt providing pictures, simple definitions in French and sentences using words in familiar context. Level 1 approximately \$2.00, Level 2, approximately \$4.00. Available from:

Clark, Irwin & Company Ltd.
791 St. Clair Avenue West,
Toronto, Ontario, M6C 1B8

Le Français Fondamental I (78 pages)

Le Français Fondamental II (64 pages)

First list gives the first 1,500 words and grammatical structures most frequently used in the French language. The second list adds the next 2,000 words to this list. A section on grammar is included. Available at about \$1.00 each from:

Marcel Didier (Canada) Limitée
2050 rue de Bleury, Suite 500, Montréal
Québec, H3A 2J4

Suitable for later Stage III and Stage V

Dictionnaire Fondamental (Gougenheim)

A soft cover dictionary containing 3,500 words of "Le Français Fondamental". Simple definitions in French, some illustrations provided. Available at about \$5.00 from:

Marcel Didier (Canada) Limitée
2050 rue de Bleury, Suite 500,
Montréal, Québec H3A 2J4

Les Idiotismes du Français Fondamental Premier Degré (Pryce)

Soft cover book containing most common French idioms illustrated with humorous drawings. Also contains suggested exercises.

Priced at about \$4.25, available from:

Clark Irwin & Company Ltd.
791 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario M6C 1B8

Dictionnaire des Synonymes et des Antonymes (Dupuis, Légaré)

Hard cover edition, arranged in alphabetical order. Word is followed by synonyms and then antonyms. Where possible these are divided into three classes: Class I - related to the usual sense of the word. Class II - related to an extended meaning of the word. Class III - related to a figurative sense. Price, approximately \$9.00. This is on the list of materials recommended for Acadian schools. May be ordered from:

Corporation des Editions Fides
235 est, boul., Dorchester, Montréal
H2X 1N9

Petit Dictionnaire Canadien de la Langue Française (Bélisle, Beauchemin)

Hard cover dictionary containing 3,000 Canadian terms, history and geography. A list of major cities of the world and their population is provided at the back of the dictionary. Cost, approximately \$5.00, available from:

Copp Clark Pittman
517 Wellington Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5V 1G1

Dictionnaire du Vocabulaire Essentiel (Matoré)

Soft cover dictionary, large print, containing 5,000 most frequently used words. Available from:

Les Editions Française Inc.,
192 sud, rue Dorchester, Québec, Québec
G1K 5Y9

Suitable for Levels V and VI
and for resources for the teacher

Micro Robert (Robert et al)

Hard cover, basic French language dictionary including appendices listing adjectives, common suffixes, verb conjugations, etc.

Price, about \$10.00 listed in materials recommended for Acadian schools or may be ordered from:

Lidec Inc.
1083 rue, Van-Horne
Montréal, Québec H2V 1J6

Le Petit Robert

Similar to above but more items included. Price about \$24.00.

Listed in materials recommended for Acadian schools or may be ordered from:

Lidec Inc.
1083 rue, Van-Horne
Montréal, Québec H2V 1J6

Petit LaRousse (Gillon, LaRousse et al)

Hard cover, standard French language dictionary. Available from:

Les Editions Françaises Inc.
192 sud, rue Dorchester, Québec, Québec
H2L 3L7

French Bilingual Dictionary (Lipton)

Soft cover French/English dictionary, containing common equivalents, some illustrations, verb conjugations, word finder lists.

Approximately \$4.75, available from:

Burns & MacEachern Ltd.
62 Rainside Road, Suite 3
Don Mills, Ontario M3A 1A6

Harrap's Compact French and English Dictionary (Forbes et al)

Hard cover - a good standard bilingual dictionary. Cost, about \$12.95, available from:

Gage Educational Publishing Ltd.
164 Commander Blvd.
Agincourt, Ontario
M1S 3C7

Harrap's French-English Dictionary

Similar to above but more items included. Price about \$20.00.
Available from lists of materials recommended for Acadian Schools
or from:

Gage Educational Publishing Ltd.
164 Commander Blvd.
Agincourt, Ontario
M1S 3C7

LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

Verbs

French Verb Wheel - irregular verbs

approximately \$2.65 (code no. 262595)

D.C. Heath Canada Ltd.

Suite 1600, 100 Adelaide Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5H 1S9

French Verb Drills

Written exercises and drills using both regular and irregular verbs. Index of verbs is provided. Price about \$3.05. Available from:

Copp Clark

517 Wellington Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5V 1G1

How to Use French Verbs

General reference for the conjugation and use of French verbs.

Price, approximately \$5.00. Available from:

Burns & MacEachern Limited

62 Railside Road

Don Mills, Ontario M3A 1A6

201 French Verbs

501 French Verbs

Both available from the same source as How to Use French Verbs. These provide a good reference source for verbs, fully conjugated and listed in alphabetical order. An English-French index is provided. Price, approximately \$2.00 for 201 Verbs, \$6.00 for 501 Verbs.

The Subjunctive

A soft cover booklet containing excerpts of materials treating the use of the subjunctive mood, taken from Passeport Français (Morgan Kenney). Price about \$2.75. Available from:

D.C. Heath Canada Ltd.

Suite 1600, 100 Adelaide Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5H 1S9

General Treatment of Grammar

French Structure in Review

Student's workbook format, plus teacher's reference manual. Straightforward approach to review and practice of common grammatical forms. Each section is provided with a simple test. French/English glossary at back of student's book. Approximately \$4.00. Available from:

Copp Clark

517 Wellington Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5V 1G1

Petit Code Grammatical

Soft cover edition. Well organized reference for basic information on grammatical forms. Price about \$2.75. Available from:

Brault et Bouthillier

700 Beaumont

Montréal, Québec, H3N 1V5

En Bonne Forme

Soft cover review grammar. Includes exercises which may be done orally or in writing. Each chapter contains a reading selection to illustrate the grammatical explanations of the lesson. Price about \$9.50. Available from:

D.C. Heath Canada Limited

Suite 1600, 100 Adelaide Street West

Toronto, Ontario M5H 1S9

French Made Clear

Soft cover edition. Contains simple explanations (in English) of grammatical information followed by structure drills applying the information. Price about \$4.75. Available from:

Clarke Irwin & Co. Ltd.

791 St. Clair Avenue, West

Toronto, Ontario M6C 1B8

La Grammaire à L'Oeuvre (2e édition)

Soft cover edition. Well indexed source of information on basic grammatical forms. Good use is made of tables to demonstrate constructions. Simple, clear explanations. Price about \$8.00. Available from:

Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd.

Attention: Marketing Services Department

55 Horner Avenue

Toronto, Ontario M8Z 4X6

Le Bon Usage (Grevisse)

Complete authoritative source of grammatical information. Useful as a teacher's resource or for students at levels V or VI.

Price approximately \$26.00. Available from lists of materials recommended for Acadian schools or from:

Lidec Inc.

1083, rue Van Horne

Montréal, Québec, H2V 1J6

L'esprit des Mots (Vol. 1)

Soft cover, analysis of grammatical forms from the perspective of linguistics. Useful as a resource for the teacher and for advanced students. Available from:

Mondia Distribution Inc.

1977, boul. Industriel Chomedey

Laval, Québec, H7S 1P6

Verbe: _____ Radical _____ Terminaison _____ Signifie: _____ Nom: _____

— TEMPS . PRIMITIFS —

I. Infinitif Présent:	II. Participe Présent:	III. Participe Passé:	IV. Indicatif Présent:	V. Passé Simple:
_____	_____	_____	Je _____	Je _____
<i>1. Futur:</i>	<i>1. Indicatif Imparfait:</i>	<i>1. Passé Composé:</i>	<i>1. Indicatif Présent:</i>	<i>1. Passé Simple:</i>
Je _____	Je _____	Je _____	Je _____	Je _____
Tu _____	Tu _____	<i>2. Plus-Que-Parfait:</i>	Tu _____	Tu _____
Il _____	Il _____	Je _____	Il _____	Il _____
Nous _____	Nous _____	<i>3. Passé Antérieur:</i>	Nous _____	Nous _____
Vous _____	Vous _____	Je _____	Vous _____	Vous _____
Ils _____	Ils _____	<i>4. Futur Antérieur:</i>	Ils _____	Ils _____
<i>2. Conditionnel:</i>	<i>2. Subjonctif Présent:</i>	Je _____	<i>2. Imperatif:</i>	<i>2. Subjonctif Imparfait:</i>
Je _____	Que je _____	<i>5. Conditionnel Passé:</i>	Singulier:	Que je _____
Tu _____	Que tu _____	Je _____	2. _____	Que tu _____
Il _____	Qu'il _____	<i>6. Subjonctif Parfait:</i>	Pluriel:	Qu'il _____
Nous _____	Que nous _____	Que je _____	1. _____	Que nous _____
Vous _____	Que vous _____	<i>7. Subjonctif-Plus-Que-Parfait:</i>	2. _____	Que vous _____
Ils _____	Qu'ils _____	Que je _____		Qu'ils _____

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